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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Spain

DATE: 25X1A6a

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SUBJECT Activities and Opinions of Manuel Jimenez Fernandez

DIST. 3 February 1947

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SUPPLEMENT [redacted]

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ORIGIN [redacted]

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1. Manuel Jimenez Fernandez, professor of Canon Law at the University of Seville and former CEDA Minister of Agriculture under the Republic, is the sponsor of the Popular Christian Party, which apparently is still in the formative stage. Jimenez Fernandez is closely watched by the police, so that his ability to organize is considerably hampered. However, it is reported that some progress is being made.

2. He reportedly keeps in direct contact with one fully trusted friend in each province of southern Spain. These friends have other constituents in various towns, who in turn are in charge of the enlistment of recruits. They are scattered throughout Andalusia and Extremadura. He has a few good friends in Valencia; in Murcia he is represented by Siso Cavero. Others in Segovia, Zaragoza, Leon and Galicia have offered their unconditional support to him. He has no delegate in Madrid.

3. In mid-November, Jimenez Fernandez outlined the progress of his Popular Christian movement as follows:

> At the moment the party can depend only on the widely diffused sympathy which it is awakening in intellectual circles, in the neutral middle class, among sincere, socially-conscious Catholics and in the old republican parties of the left-center. It is not feasible, in view of the present restrictions and police surveillance, to do more than talk with some friend in each important city and distribute propaganda against the Franco regime, while formulating and polishing a definite program to be ready at the propitious moment.

4. Jimenez Fernandez, because of his influence with his students and with Catholics in general, has received overtures from other leading Catholics complacent toward or actually supporting the present regime. He has rejected all such overtures, stating that he does not wish to discredit the party by the remotest connection with personalities affiliated with Franco. He told source that his letter of February 1946 to Joaquin Ruiz Jimenez setting forth the incompatibility of their respective positions would have involved him in difficulties if Foreign Minister Alberto Martin Artajo, mindful of Jimenez Fernandez's influence, had not intervened in his behalf. Angel Herrera, pastor in Santander and active in Accion Catolica, approached Jimenez Fernandez with an invitation to discuss their respective views and likewise was rebuffed because of his complacency toward the present regime.

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5. It is Jimenez Fernandez's opinion that further delay in action against Franco is working to the advantage of the Communists and that Spain will incline toward Communism if energetic action is not taken soon. He believes that the only possible solution to the Spanish problem lies in following in the democratic footsteps of Belgium, France, and Italy. He is of the opinion that Gil Robles' monarchist activities, if successful, might lead to a situation in Spain similar to that of Greece. Jimenez Fernandez does not trust Gil Robles completely, considering him an opportunist. He affirmed that Gil Robles' statements with regard to the Franco regime have not been entirely consistent and that Gil Robles is potentially a political turncoat. He is of the opinion that a government headed by Don Juan would be little better than that of Franco.

6. As for the Giral Government, Jimenez Fernandez considers it discredited and advocates its dissolution.* Its installation in Spain, he believes, would lead to a situation comparable to that of Bulgaria. About the middle of October, a representative of the Spanish exile government visited him to offer him a post in the cabinet, which he declined. Jimenez Fernandez says that the great majority of Spanish people would place more reliance on a resistance movement activated from the interior than on any movement having its origin outside Spain.

7. A representative of the British Embassy with whom Jimenez Fernandez talked on 31 October reportedly was pleased with his attitude of willingness to collaborate in a transition government. Jimenez Fernandez believes that such a government should include all anti-Franco elements, not excepting the Communists. He is preserving for the future a letter received from Dolores Ibarruri, Secretary General of the Spanish Communist Party, promising that the Communists will not direct their activities against the Catholics. He also has a letter from the Communist Party in Seville commending him for his efforts to avert the execution of some one hundred condemned political prisoners.

8. He was approached by certain military men with regard to an attempt to effect a military coup d'etat, but refused collaboration in such a plan, saying that a new government could not be successfully established through the medium of the Army which is discredited because of the favoritism it enjoys under the present regime. He also fears that some of the military men, afraid of being called to account by a popular government for their past misdeeds, might capitulate to Franco in return for a guarantee of their personal safety.

9. Shortly before 3 December, he was visited by Cesar Jalon, who was sent by Minister of Labor Giron. Jalon told him that Giron did not trust Franco and was working in his own way to effect his removal.

10. Jimenez Fernandez considers that the Infante Don Alfonso de Orleans y Borbon might be an acceptable candidate to head a transition government, which would hold a plebiscite within a year after its establishment. In Jimenez Fernandez's opinion, the Infante is a man who should have universal appeal since he knows both court life and the life of the working man. For several years he worked incognito as an ordinary employee of a business in the United States.** He is a Catholic, of fairly liberal ideas, of sound character, and, according to Jimenez Fernandez, would be conscientious about his reponsibilities.

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[redacted] Comments:

*Since this report was written, Giral has resigned.

**According to information from other sources, after the abdication of Alfonso XIII, General Alfonso de Orleans y Borbon went to the United States and obtained employment with the Ford Motor Company, starting as a mechanic.

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11. Of the exiled republican personalities, Jimenez Fernandez considers Martinez Barrio the best qualified to represent the Republic. Jimenez Fernandez stated that he would be willing to form part of a committee headed by Martinez Barrio which would have the character of a transition government and which would seek admission to the United Nations. Jimenez Fernandez suggested that such a committee might include two rightists such as Gil Robles and Juan Ventosa; two republicans, possibly Dolores Ibarruri and Miguel Maura; and two persons representing the Basques and the Catalans. According to source, his views on the procedure that should be adopted are as follows:

As soon as the committee is established, efforts should be undertaken to secure its recognition by those nations which recognized the Giral Government, and others among which he counts the Scandinavian monarchies and possibly Portugal, the last through preliminary work for which he hopes to secure the cooperation of England and the United States. The seat of the committee could be Brussels, or, if it is recognized by the Portuguese Government, Lisbon might be preferable. The committee would name six ministers inside Spain, who would present themselves simultaneously to demand possession of their respective posts. A campaign should be initiated against the three supports of the present regime: the Church, the financiers and the Army.

The Vatican being the best point of attack against the Spanish Church, the Holy See should issue a statement to the effect that within the present pontifical doctrines a democratic regime is the one that Pius XII considers best qualified to maintain personal rights. Jimenez Fernandez stated in this connection that if the Pope did not take a position in the Spanish question soon, there would be a great defection from the Church. He added that the Papal Nuncio in Spain, Msgr. Cayetano Cicognani, whom he considers corrupt and foolish, should be replaced, and that Rome should rebuke such elements as the Bishop of Madrid-Alcala, Eijo Garay.

In the campaign against the financiers, a rigorous investigation must be undertaken of the fortunes which under Falangist protection have prospered extensively, the olive oil and sugar scandals should be publicized, and return demanded of Falangist funds placed abroad.

The campaign against the army will be somewhat simplified if the provisional government is recognized by various nations and by the U.N. Military men responsible for murders and shootings, and the heads of prisons who have participated in atrocities, must be tried.

His plan is that England and the United States would ask Franco to leave Spain, a representative of England going to Franco to place at his disposal suitable means for his departure.

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